General Assembly

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Third Committee (A/59/496)*]

59/164. Improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system

The General Assembly,

Recalling Articles 1 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as Article 8, which provides that the United Nations shall place no restrictions on the eligibility of men and women to participate in any capacity and under conditions of equality in its principal and subsidiary organs,

Recalling also the goal, contained in the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, [1] of achieving overall gender equality, particularly at the Professional level and above, by 2000 and the further actions and initiatives set out in the outcome document adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", [2]

1. *Takes note with appreciation* the report of the Secretary-General; [3]

2. *Welcomes*:

(*a*) The commitment of the Secretary-General to meeting the goal of gender equality and his assurance that gender balance will be given the highest priority in his continuing efforts to bring about a new management culture in the Organization;

(*b*) The new initiatives and strategies undertaken system-wide and at the Secretariat level to achieve gender balance, including paying special attention to the identification of suitably qualified women candidates, strengthening of recruitment sources for women, development of recruitment strategies in substantive areas, enhancing women's career development, fostering attitudinal changes and introducing family-friendly policies;

(*c*) The increase in the proportion of women in the Professional and higher categories of staff with appointments of one year or more;

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[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[2] Resolution S-23/3, annex.

[3] A/59/357.

3. *Regrets* that the goal of 50/50 gender distribution has not been met and that overall progress in achieving this goal remains limited;

4. *Notes with concern* the continuing lack of representation of women at higher levels of decision-making, especially at the Under-Secretary-General level;

5. *Notes with particular concern* that gender balance considerations have yet to be effectively integrated throughout the human resources management policies of the United Nations;

6. *Reaffirms* the urgent goal of achieving 50/50 gender distribution in all categories of posts within the United Nations system, especially at senior and policy-making levels, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations;

7. *Stresses* the need to address the continuing lack of representation or underrepresentation of women from certain countries, in particular from developing and least developed countries, from countries with economies in transition and from unrepresented or largely underrepresented Member States;

8. *Reaffirms* the need to continue to develop innovative recruitment strategies to identify and attract suitably qualified women candidates, in particular from, and in, developing and least developed countries and countries with economies in transition and other Member States that are unrepresented or underrepresented in the Secretariat;

9. *Reaffirms also* its resolution 58/144 of 22 December 2003, and requests increased and sustained efforts towards its full implementation;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system to ensure that recruitment strategies, promotion and retention policies, career development, justice, anti-harassment and sexual harassment policies, human resources and succession planning, work/family policies, management culture and mechanisms for managerial accountability accelerate the goal of 50/50 gender distribution;

11. *Urges* the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system to redouble their efforts to realize significant progress towards the goal of 50/50 gender distribution in the very near future;

12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to enable the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women to effectively contribute to, monitor and facilitate the setting and achievement of gender targets in human resource action plans, including by ensuring access to the information required to carry out that work;

13. *Strongly encourages* Member States to support the efforts of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, funds and programmes to achieve the goal of 50/50 gender distribution, especially at senior and policy-making levels, by identifying and regularly submitting more women candidates for appointment to positions in the United Nations system, by identifying and proposing national recruitment sources in cooperation with national women's machineries and professional organization networks and by encouraging more women to apply for positions within the Secretariat, the specialized agencies, funds and programmes and the regional commissions, including in areas in which women are underrepresented, such as peacekeeping, peacebuilding and other non-traditional areas;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide an oral report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-ninth and fiftieth sessions and to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session on the implementation of the present resolution, including by providing up-to-date statistics on all levels of the United Nations system.

74th plenary meeting
20 December 2004